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OFFICE OF PETITIONS

Applicant: Pompejus et al.

Appl. No.: 10/721,922

Filing Date: November 24, 2003

Title: CORYNEBACTERIUM GLUTAMICUM GENES ENCODING PROTEINS INVOLVED
IN HOMEOSTASIS AND ADAPTATION

Attorney Docket No.: BGI-132CPCN

Pub. No.: US 2005/0191732 A1

Pub. Date: September 1, 2005

This is a decision on the request for a corrected patent application publication under 37 CFR 1.221(b), received on November 1, 2005, for the above-identified application

The request is DISMISSED.

Applicant requests that the application be republished because the patent application publication contains a material error, as the preliminary amendment to the benefit/priority claim, which was submitted to correct the priority claim on March 24, 2004, was not included in the publication. The filing date of the German priority documents was changed from July 2, 1999 to July 14, 1999.

37 CFR 1.221(b) is applicable "only when the Office makes a material mistake which is apparent from Office records . . . Any request for a corrected publication or revised patent application publication other than provided as provided in paragraph (a) of this section must be filed within two months from the date of the patent application publication. This period is not extendable." A material mistake must affect the public's ability to appreciate the technical disclosure of the patent application publication, to determine the scope of the patent application publication, or to determine the scope of the provisional rights that an applicant may seek to enforce upon issuance of a patent.¹

¹Changes to Implement Eighteen-Month Publication of Patent Applications, 65 FR 57023, 57038 (Sept. 20, 2000), 1239 Off. Gaz. Pat. Office Notices 63, 75 (Oct. 10, 2000) (final rule).

The patent application publication does not include a mistake in the publication by the Office because patent application publications are not required to include preliminary amendments, according to 37 CFR 1.215(a)², which says the following, in part:

(a) ... The patent application publication will be based upon the specification and drawings deposited on the filing date of the application, as well as the executed oath or declaration submitted to complete the application. The patent application publication may also be based upon amendments to the specification (other than the abstract or the claims) that are reflected in a substitute specification under Sec. 1.125(b), amendments to the abstract under Sec. 1.121(b), amendments to the claims that are reflected in a complete claim listing under Sec. 1.121(c), and amendments to the drawings under Sec. 1.121(d), provided that such substitute specification or amendment is submitted in sufficient time to be entered into the Office file wrapper of the application before technical preparations for publication of the application have begun.

§ 1.215(c) says the following:

(c) At applicant's option, the patent application publication will be based upon the copy of the application (specification, drawings, and oath or declaration) as amended, provided that applicant supplies such a copy in compliance with the Office electronic filing system requirements within one month of the mailing date of the first Office communication that includes a confirmation number for the application, or fourteen months of the earliest filing date for which a benefit is sought under title 35, United States Code, whichever is later.

While the patent application publication may now include a preliminary amendment, the Office is not required to use the preliminary amendment. The Office has recently changed the procedures for publication of patent applications so as to publish applications as amended, when possible. Until this past year, patent application publications were published as originally filed. See Patent Application Publications May Now Include Amendments, 1281 Off. Gaz. Pat. Office Notices 53 (April 13, 2004). The preliminary amendment filed March 24, 2004 did not comply with 37 CFR 1.125. The applicant did not supply a copy of the application in compliance with 37 CFR 1.215(c). The Office correctly published the application in accordance with 37 CFR 1.215(a).

The application was correctly published. The instant application listed the priority dates for application 19932914.1 and 19933006.9 as July 9, 2004 in the first line of the specification and the application data sheet (ADS). Requester argues that the correct date was given in the oath, which was also filed with the application. According to 37 CFR 1.76(d), the ADS controls if conflicting information is provided on the ADS and the oath.

To make a benefit/priority claim, 37 CFR 1.78 in summary requires that the benefit claim to an earlier filed application be contained in the first sentence of the application or be submitted in an

²Changes to Support Implementation of the United States Patent and Trademark Office 21st Century Strategic Plan; Final Rule, 69 FR 56482 (Sept. 21, 2004).

amendment or application data sheet within the required time frame within the later of four months from the actual filing date or the date on which the national stage commenced, or sixteen months from the filing date of the prior-filed application. According to 37 CFR 1.55, the priority claim must identify the foreign application and filing date, within the required time frame within the later of four months from the actual filing date or the date on which the national stage commenced, or sixteen months from the filing date of the prior-filed application.³ Since a proper benefit claim to an earlier filed application was not made within the required time period, it was not properly published on the patent application publication.

In order to make a late benefit claim to the earlier filed applications, applicant must submit a petition to accept an unintentionally delayed claim under 35 U.S.C. 119 and 120 for the benefit of the earlier filed applications. The petition must include 1) the surcharge (\$1370) set forth in 37 CFR 1.14(t) and 2) a statement that the entire delay between the date the claim was due under paragraph (a)(5) of this section and the date the claim was filed was unintentional. The petition must also include a proper reference (amendment) to the prior applications in order for the petition to be granted.

Applicant is reminded of his duty to conduct a reasonable inquiry before filing a paper before the Office. See MPEP 410.

Applicants' request for a corrected patent application publication on November 1, 2005, may constitute a "failure to engage in reasonable efforts to conclude processing or examination of the application." See 1.704(c). This determination will be made on or after a mailing of a Notice of Allowance.

It would greatly benefit the Office if applicant did not provide a complete copy of the preliminary amendments and a copy of the pre-grant publication, as it unnecessarily increases the cost to the Office. See 37 CFR 1.4(b). A request for corrected publication need only point out what was printed incorrectly in the application, where the error occurs in the publication and where the correct text is found in the application papers. Marked up relevant copies of the applications papers and the pre-grant publication may facilitate processing of the request. If it is not clear why the error is a material error, further explanation may be warranted.

The applicant is advised that a "request for republication of an application previously published" may be filed under 37 CFR 1.221(a). Such a request for republication "must include a copy of the application in compliance with the Office's electronic filing system requirements and be accompanied by the publication fee set forth in § 1.18(d) and the processing fee set forth in § 1.17(i)." If the request for republication does not comply with the electronic filing system requirements, the republication will not take place and the publication fee set forth in § 1.18(d) will be refunded. The processing fee will be retained.

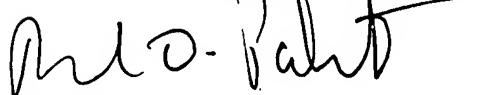
³ See Claiming the Benefit of a Prior-Filed Application under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119(e), 120, 121, and 365(c), 1268 Off. Gaz. Pat. Office Notices 89 (March 18, 2003).

Any request for republication under 37 CFR 1.221(a), must be submitted via the EFS system and questions or request for reconsideration of the decision, should be addressed as follows:

By mail to: Mail Stop PGPUB
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Va. 22313-1450

By facsimile: 571-273-8300

Inquiries relating to this matter may be directed to Mark Polutta at (571) 272-7709.



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